

WHALING
with

CAPTAIN PENNIMAN



LOG
of
THOMAS KNOWLES

CAPE COD COMMUNITY COLLEGE



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Whaling with Captain Penniman

Log of Thomas Knowles



Edited by Donald S. Heines

ORLEANS, MASSACHUSETTS

FOREWARD



The academic year 1859-1860 at Harvard College appeared, on the surface, to be rather normal. Thomas Knowles, from nearby New Bedford was "reciting in Modern Greek and Latin, Astronomy, Spanish and Chemistry" as he notes in his journal. Dr. Walker resigned the presidency and, shortly thereafter, Professor Cornelius Felton was elected president. There were the usual pranks: "Parker of my class entered the chapel last night to place the Yale College Bible in the pulpit in place of the one that had been absconded and sent to Yale..." He had tea with the president. His father visited him from New Bedford, noted in his journal in appropriate Latin: "Pater venit post meridiem me videre in Cambridgiense."

However, there were serious undertones to this seemingly idyllic collegiate atmosphere. In December 1859 John Brown was hanged and Knowles and several others went into Boston to the John Brown Meeting in Freemont Temple where, as Knowles writes, "Garrison and others spoke." There are other hints throughout his journal that events outside Cambridge, particularly questions of slavery and secession, were having an impact.

Reading his journal it is not possible to conclude that these events, or others, led him to leave Harvard in May 1860 -- without taking his examinations.

His decision was to sail on the bark MINERVA, out of New Bedford, Edward Penniman in command. This was not too difficult a decision since the year previous Captain Penniman had married Knowles' cousin Augusta from Eastham, Massachusetts. It also promised to be rather exciting since this was Penniman's first command.

This whaling voyage, as the log (once a journal) demonstrates, was not an easy one. Initial ambition and excitement soon gave way to dreariness and monotony. The goal of heading to the Pacific Ocean was soon altered, at least for Knowles. The sperm whale proved to be an elusive quarry.

However, in all this disappointment there emerges from Knowles' writing a vivid, accurate picture of mid-nineteenth century whaling from the perspective of a novice, much as the reader would be if in the same position.

Then, as a bonus, at the end the reactions of a sensitive, educated young man who becomes a tourist in England and France, followed by his return to America on a ship filled with immigrants.

But, that's later. For now, the journal has become a log as Thomas Knowles sets sail from New Bedford on the bark MINERVA.



THOMAS KNOWLES, c. 1859



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May 15 Tuesday

At 9 o'clock set sail from the lower harbor of New Bedford on the good ship *Minerva*, Captain Edward Penniman on board on a whaling voyage to Indian Ocean and New Zealand. I intend to go to the Western Islands and return from there in a packet or whaling vessel. Stood out of the bay with a N. E. wind and discharged pilot at 11 o'clock A. M. Joseph, John B. Sidney, Henry Peirce and Alfred Hitch came down and returned in the pilot boat. In the afternoon the wind hauled to S. E. and we stood S. by W. close hauled. Turned in early miserably seasick. Bark *Roscoe* sailed in company with us.

May 16 Wednesday

Calm during the night and this morning. Breeze this afternoon from S. E. Steering S. by W. All hands (except the sick green hand) employed in fixing the boats for whaling. Have been most wretchedly sick all day. Two or three sails in sight.

May 17 Thursday

This forenoon steamed to S. in the wind, and are now at night with nearly a calm turning in the blue waters of the Gulf Stream.

May 18 Friday

About noon hauled to S. S. E. and we tacked ship to E. ward. Am getting the better of my sea-sickness.

Saturday 19

Wind S. S. E. Steering to the Eastward with a strong breeze somewhat squally. As we were reefing top-sail a large ship passed across our bows with stay sails and studding-sails set steering E. by N. probably from Charles Town and bound to Europe. She was a grand sight. A schooner at the leeward has been working up to us during the day and is now about 9 or 10 miles astern of us. Lookouts have been aloft yesterday and to-day watching for whales. Have been struggling and practicing navigation, and feel thoroughly competent to take charge of an ocean steamer.

Sunday 20

Steering S. E. with a fair wind. A beautiful day, but a very dull day on board ship. Read some and enjoyed the ocean and sky. The schooner in sight ahead, a lovely sunset. Thunder & lightening last night.

Monday, May 21

Very pleasant indeed. Thermometer at 72. Light wind from N. E. Have been steering S.S.E. Just before dinner spotted a brig which passed across our bow with her Ensign at half-mast. It proved to be the Palestine of Plymouth, 60 days from Palermo, having had dead wind for 40 days. He enquired our longitude and how long we were out. He was bound to New York. This noon a school of porpoises were playing under our bows but left before we could get an iron rigged. At four o'clock we lowered the boats for practice. The second mate's boat staid out only a few minutes, on account of leaking badly. I pulled the after oar in the Captain's boat. Commenced studying to-day on my review of Astronomy. Am daily growing more proficient in navigation. Can find the latitude with the quadrant, and the longitude. Have not attempted to learn "Lunars" yet. Spent some time at mast-head this afternoon looking for whales.

Tuesday May 22

Very fine weather. A light breeze from the W. Have been steering S. E. Reading and studying. Nothing of note.

Wednesday May 23

Very pleasant. Wind from the W. Have been steering S. E. All hands still employed in fitting the boats and lines for whaling. No vessel in sight. Saw numbers of flying-fish. Are all ready now to catch a whale, if we can see one.

Thursday 24

Steering E. Have had strong winds and rain squalls from the W. Quite rugged. A school of blackfish passed near the ship, but I was in the cabin at the time. Nothing of note. No sail in sight.

Friday 25

Steering E. by N. Wind from W. Saw some blackfish near the ship, but it was too rugged to lower the boats for them. Assorted the letter-bag. Have been studying astronomy. Have finished reading Goethe's Elective Affinities. No sail in sight. Saw to-night one of the finest sunsets I ever witnessed. Left the side-light open and met the second mate's berth.

Saturday May 26

Quite pleasant, some rain clouds, a moderate breeze from the W. Steering E. by N. Decks were washed Saturday afternoons at 4 o'clock and swept on other days. Most of the crew begin to manifest a fair share of intelligence and take hold of the work in earnest, but one of them seems to know nothing and not to be able to learn anything. He came whaling, because they told him he would have nothing to do. One of them says he

belongs to a respectable family in Rochester N. Y. and ran away from home with another fellow who has gone in some other ship.

Sunday 27

Very pleasant. Steering S. E. with wind from W. Have spent the day rather indolently. One or two fin-back were seen from masthead. Are now in cruising ground, and are "lying-to" under foretop stay sail, fore sail and reefed main sail.

Monday 28

Breezy wet and uncomfortable. Steering S. with wind from W. "Lying to" tonight under short sail. "Lying to" is "whaleman's comfort."

Tuesday May 29

Very pleasant. Standing to W. this afternoon. A spout was seen from the masthead, supposed to be a fin-back. Nothing of note.

Wednesday May 30

Damp and rainy. Standing to rest during the day, at night more ship to E. This forenoon a whaling bark passed to windward of us on the other tack. She bore down as though to meet and then hauled leeward again and went out of sight. We supposed to be either the Roscoe or the Barnstable.

Thursday 31

A truly wretched day. Rainy, foggy, breezy and "muggy" generally. Have concluded to leave this grounds having seen no prospect for whales. Standing east on the wind with short sail. So ends.

Friday June 1

Quite pleasant. Had a squall of rain with thunder and lightening about two o'clock, this morning. I attempted to go on deck, but found it raining in torrents. Standing East, wind S. W. Saw a tropic-bird, a brilliant meteor & tempest in distance. Mr. Swift, our mate, is a thorough sailor and is fond of telling yarns. These are some: In Panama Bay it rains so constantly and so hard that the whales don't know when they get to the top of the water but jump six feet up into the rain. There are violent winds off Cape of Good Hope, and once as he was passing there 5 sheep blew off from the land and lodged in the main-top of his ship. Their tails weighed 25 lbs. apiece. There the sheep have 5 quarters, the tail being one. While sitting in a hotel at Callas, he has seen the tumblers jump two feet from the table or counter, the effects of a shock of an earthquake. He has also seen it rain so hard as to drown all the birds. The blacksmith, the stupidest man on board the ship, an Irishman, was steering to-day with the wind just aft of the starboard beam and

got the ship off her course until he got the wind on the larboard quarter, still keeping his helm "hard up."

Saturday June 2

Quite pleasant, but so smoky and thick that we are unable to see a great distance. Two sails passed astern of us one, a whaleman heading S. W., the other a merchant man N. E. Standing E. by N. fair wind.

Sunday June 3, 1860

Very pleasant with a shower at night. The rain passed by the vessel a few yards distant, scarcely wetting the ship. Steering E. N. E. with fair wind. No sail in sight. Porpoises were seen near the ship this forenoon, not near enough, however, to be caught. Fished up some of the "Gulf weed", of which there are immense quantities floating to the N. E. and found in it crabs, jelly fishes, eels and shrimp. The "Gulf weed" is itself very pretty, being partly covered with an incrustation resembling coral.

Monday 4th

Very pleasant, with shower at night. Standing E. N. E. with fair wind. No sail, whale, fish, bird or sea weed in sight. How I would like to see a late newspaper. Lowered the boats to-night for practice and got thoroughly soaked by the rain which came down in floods before we returned to the ship. The blacksmith, in the mate's boat attempted to row sitting in the line-tub and facing forward.

Tuesday 5th

Very pleasant and quite warm. Just after dinner discovered a wreck ahead and on pulling to it in the captain's boat found it an old wreck of a s[c]hooner or brig of about 120 tons loaded with lumber. She had been drifting probably a year being completely covered with barnacles and muscles [sic]. She had been boarded before and everything taken from her that could be got off. Her deck was under water and we could get only a few boards from the hold. Returned to the ship and got some lines and went again and got about 125 fish, hauling them in as fast as we could throw our lines which we baited with a piece of white cloth. While we were gone, the mate fastened with our iron to a large fish 4 or 5 ft. long called a "barracootak," and when we came back had him cleaned and hung up; so that we shall live on fish for some time. It was the richest fishing I was ever engaged in. One sail in sight, standing N. E. with fair wind though very light. Saw a pilot fish today, a small fish with black and white stripes around his body swimming just in front of the cut water.

Wednesday June 6, 1860

Very pleasant, but very warm. Standing N. E. by E. with light wind from S. W. Nothing important.

Thursday 7th

Very pleasant. Standing N. E. by E. with light wind from N. W. Prepared an iron to strike porpoise, but the school did not come near enough. Nothing important.

Friday 8th

A damp unpleasant wind from N. W. Standing N. E. by E. The cry of "There she blows" was heard from mast-head this afternoon. But instead of sperm whales, the spouting whales were found to be a couple of "hump backs" a difficult fish to catch in deep water on account of their sounding. They came within half a mile of the ship.

Saturday 9th

Very pleasant. Standing N. E. by E. with good breeze from W. An hermaphrodite brig passed about a mile astern this morning steering S. Plenty of "Portuguese men of war." The mate saw a turtle from the mast head.

Sunday June 10

A strong wind from N. W. and quite rugged. Steering E. N. E. under top sails, foresail, and staysail. Porpoises have been about the ship several times. At noon the Captain struck one and the iron drew. This afternoon he struck one and got him on board. The porpoise belongs to the whale species and a very nice oil can be got from his jaw. I am going to save his under jaw.

Monday 11

Quite pleasant, a moderate breeze from N. W. Steering E. N. E. Are now in good whaling grounds. Porpoises have been near the ship several times.

Tuesday 12

Foggy and unpleasant. Standing E. by N. with moderate breeze. This afternoon struck a porpoise and got him as high as the rail when the iron drew and lost him. Just before eight o'clock (in the evening, thick weather and nearly dark) a large sperm whale was raised from off deck, distant about 1/4 mile from the ship, and seen to spout 12 or 15 times. By the time the boats were in the water, the whale turned flukes and went down. Larboard boat lowered 3 men, bow with 2. A sad disappointment...

Wednesday June 13, 1860

Foggy all day, and for most of the time so thick as to prevent seeing more than half a mile. So that our eighty-barrel whale (\$3000) is still safe in the ocean depths. A spout was seen this afternoon and proved to be a fin-back. After seeing the whale last night we wove ship to S. W.

Thursday 14

Very pleasant and quite clear. Cruising under short sail. Good breeze from N. W. Numbers of fin-backs in sight one of which came within a few ship's length of us. Lowered the captain's boat to shoot him but did not find him when he came up. Sulphur-bottoms, fin-backs and hump-backs and blackfish have been seen going to windward quick. Captain struck a porpoise this afternoon and got him in. They make about a gallon of oil. I darted twice at them and scratched one. Vessel passed very near us about 10 o'clock.

Friday 15

Damp, cold and part of the day foggy and rainy. Standing E. by N. with wind from S. S. E. and heavy head beat sea and swell so that we make little head way. Several fin-backs seen, but no sperm whales. This morning a sail was in sight bound E. Nothing of importance. Under short sail to-night. All the fish bound to the windward as yesterday, though the wind blows in contrary direction. We are one month out today, and have seen one sp[erm] wh[ale].

Saturday 16

Very pleasant. Standing N. E. with winds from S. W. Fin-backs in sight. "Pennsylvania" was sent by the mate three times up to the fore yard to overhaul foretopsail bunt line — Eddy was kept at the mast-head from morning till night.

Sunday 17

Pleasant this forenoon, rainy this afternoon. At seven this morning lowered for a school of blackfish. Captain's boat no sooner down than 'Dan' fastened to one who started off and after nearly capsizing us several times was killed by the Captain. The boat is very crowded and the fish zigzagging and Dan keeping his line tight half filled the boat. The other boats got none.

Monday 18th

Very pleasant; but little wind, and to-night a dead-calm. Two American ships, large ones, passed near us bound N. E. and one Englishman bound E. Not a fish seen to-day except porpoises. Tried out the black fish to-day, making about a barrel. The mate's boat lowered to-night for practice. The blacksmith did not get into the line-tub.

Tuesday 19th

Very pleasant; but little wind. Jumped out of my berth this morning and into the boat and chased blackfish. We fastened, but the iron soon drew. Mate fastened twice and irons drew, without toggelling. Third mate got a cow and second mate the calf. The flesh of the calf was good eating. Steering S. S. E. Some dozen sails passing E. and W.

Wednesday 20th

Very pleasant; very clear though but little wind. A whaleship in sight some 8 miles off our lee beam, with her boats down, evidently getting ready to chase whales though keeping on her course probably so as not to attract our attention. About 9 1/2 raised a sperm whale coming nearly to windward so as to pass between the two ships. After getting as near to him as we could with the ship, at 12 1/2 lowered the boats and chased him with paddles and sails, he at the same time milling off to leeward. Chased him several hours, he continually eluding us by changing his course under water, and keeping us about so far off. After about 3 hours the wind freshened and we came up with him. He rose about a ship's length ahead of us, and we thought we were sure of him. We were sailing and paddling with all our might right after him and got abreast of his flukes. One more spout of the whale, one more boat's length ahead and the boatsturner, Mr. Bowman, would have planted his iron in his back. At that instant the whale caught sight of us and sank like a stone, leaving a boiling wake where one were. The boatsturner saw him going and threw his iron though he knew it was useless. If he had had a right-handed instead of a left-handed dart he would have reached him. We then kept straight on and when the whale kept up again he was a long distance to windward of us, coming down toward us. Thinking we could not take him head and head as we should be obliged to use our oars which would frighten him, we hauled aft our sheets, (we carried a large sail and a stridding sail) stood off to our right and then stood back again behind the whale and were again stealing on him with sails and paddles the captain having decided to steer right over his flukes. We got within a boat's length of him and down he went without seeing the boat having had his spoutings out. By this time the other two boats had overtaken us and we started to come to the ship which was nearly out of sight (10 miles off). We rowed to windward an hour and half before meeting the ship. We then made an hour and 20 minutes at rate of 5 miles and luffed to wind and made a large bright fire in an iron pot and hoisted it up for a signal to the two boats whose horns we soon heard. It was then getting rough, thick and rainy, and we were glad to get them aboard. The mate had been within two boats' length of the whale after we left. We got on board at 7 h[ours], the others 10. The other ship appeared to have got a whale, and this whale knew it and was shy.

Thursday June 21

Rugged, thick rainy and unpleasant. Close hauled on the wind, Standing S. W. The mate caught two porpoises this forenoon. Nothing important. The longest day-15 h 37 m.

Friday 22

Quite pleasant and quite clear. Cruising for whales. Captain caught a porpoise this afternoon. Nothing of importance.

Saturday 23

Strong breeze, rugged and thick part of the day. Cruising; wind from W. Caught a porpoise. A ship, with the Howe's Rig, passed near us this afternoon, on the other tack, working W. Probably an American, and about 1200 tons, deeply laden. She showed her latitude, chalked on a blackboard, 24 degrees 00 minutes, differing from ours 40', the Captain fears his chronometer may have been injured by the jarring of the gimbals by the working of the rudder and now keeps it in his chest.

Sunday 24

Strong breeze. Working S. E. A very heavy rain last night. A brig passed near us to windward this afternoon, but did not run down to us although we hauled our head yards aback.

Monday June 25, 1860

Very pleasant. Lively breeze from N. E., working to windward. At six o'clock raised a school of sperm whales about 2 miles to windward, a merchant ship having gone through them before us and stirred them up. Worked to windward about an hour and hove to when a couple of whales came up half a mile to leeward. First and second mate lowered. The mates sailed down alongside of the larger of the two, an 80bbl. whale. The boatsteerer struck, the iron drew, the whale threw up his flukes filled the boat's sail with water and rolled her over. Second mate took off 3 men, the others sat in the bottom of the boat. Third mate then went down took off the rest got a line to the ship and attempted to work the boat to the ship, but had to cut and beat up to the boat, which set a light (it now being dark), hauled her alongside and hoisted her in on deck. Saved the line, but lost both line tubs, paddles, two oars, the sail, and other small things; the gun was lashed to the thwart. Examination of the iron showed by the way in which it was bent that it had not been put in more than 5 or 6 inches. The boatsteerer's fault. He will be "broke."

Thursday 26

Blowing a half a gale of wind from the N. W. and increasing through the day. Very rough and unpleasant tonight. Ship rolling and pitching badly. The iron hoops and crockery "fetching away" and making a great racket. The only refuge is the "bunk." Lying to head to S. S. W. Have seen no sail or whale. Men engaged in repairing the damaged boat. Lying to under close reefed main topsail and spencer and fore topmosttop sail. Ship rolling infernally. "So ends."

And so begins Wednesday 27th

More moderate this morning and moderating through the day. Rather thick. Caught two porpoises this afternoon. The cook looks "blacker than thunder" whenever we catch a porpoise, it gives him so much trouble to cook them. Captain is a "dead shot"

at a porpoise. This afternoon wind close to one of Mr. Swift's line tubs, lost day before yesterday, lowered boat and picked it up. There was general overturning in the pantry about 12 o'clock last night.

Thursday 28

Foggy and damp all day long. Light wind from W. Standing N. on one tack, S. on the other. This forenoon picked up Mr. Swift's boat keg of water. Mate shot lance from whaling-gun.

Friday June 29 1860

Light wind from S. E. and very pleasant and smooth. Standing N. N. W. A ship under full sail shedding sail on both sides has been following us all day long and is 8 or 9 miles astern tonight. Lowered this morning immediately after breakfast for blackfish. Captain's and 3rd mate's boats got two apiece and the other boats one each. Captain's boat got the largest one. One of ours was a "cow" and carried her calf on her right fin after we had fastened to her. We have to be careful to keep clear of them when they go into their "flurry" and are dying. Our first one, the large one, gave a tremendous jump out of the water when we struck him. Stripped the blubber off the fish cleaned it and partly minced it. I tried the mincing knife and could use it very well. A black fish is a more dangerous fish to handle than a sperm whale, he can turn about so much quicker. The school is feeding and were quite tame and we were among them two or three hours. We moored four to a "hoke" [?] and could take no more fish having used up all our irons.

Saturday 30

Very pleasant. Light wind from E. Standing W. Have been boiling out our blackfish. The vessel bark astern of us yesterday has been near us all day having caught up with us during the night as we were lying to. We have been standing on one tack and the other to allow the smoke to drift away, while she has been steering with the wind. Heads aft and stridding-sails out. She carries no royals. She has not sailed two-thirds the distance we have, but to-night we move several miles ahead of her. Lay to after supper and waited for her to come up with us. The mate took the Captain's boat and lowered her with letters. I went with him. She proved to be the S. D. Ryerson of Yarmouth N. S. more than a month from Shilds, Eng. bound to Boston, loaded with coal and minerals. She was a dirty craft and the crew a stupid set of fellows. Their latest paper was Lloyd's London Weekly Newspaper of Apr. 8. They merely hauled up the clew of the main sail to allow us to board, and we had hard work to keep the boat clear of her sides as she was going through the water quite fast. She is the only vessel the Minerva has been able to beat. Sent a letter by her to my Father. They thought us a fast sailer and about 700 tons. She was 500 tons Eng. measurement.

Sunday July 1, 1860

Very pleasant indeed. Numerous fish in sight going to windward, viz. "Finbacks," Grampuses, Killers, Jumpers, Blackfish, Cowfish, Porpoises and Sunfish, but not a sperm whale. Wind from E. Steering N. W. & S. W.

Monday 2

Very pleasant indeed. Moderate breeze from S. E. About 12 o'clock raised a large (110 bbl.) sperm whale coming to leeward. At one, lowered three boats and sailed out ahead of the ship for time. At his second rising we got within a ship's length of him and he went down. When he came up again, the mate was in the best position, sailed on and Mr. Bowman struck him, driving the iron (a one-flue) in to the socket. The other two boats ran down to him but before either of us could fasten, the line parted by the whale's sounding and he went off to windward and across the bow of our boat, we pressing on the oars and sails, and escaped with our iron in him. He went near the ship going to windward in a hurry and rolling and flashing his flukes. After supper a vessel chased us setting main royal and showing her signal. We thinking she was in want of something, tacked ship she ran down to us and proved to be the Atlantic of New Bedford, Captain Wm B Sherman. The Captain came on board and staid two or three hours leaving at 11 o'clock. Rather a bore after a hard day's work and when we want to be digging to windward to find the whale who must be sore and lame. He was an "old sag," gray with age. Capt. S. is a great brag.

Tuesday 3

Very pleasant. Moderate breeze from S. E. Working to windward. The Atlantic was in sight this morning, some distance to windward. Today she has been running off and tonight is nearly out of sight to leeward. A whaler has been in sight boiling. The Atlantic sails but little better than we do. The Captain and all hands are very "blue" today, being nearly discouraged by yesterday's failure. The prizes are great in whaling and of course must bear a small proportion in number to the losses, which are not however for that reason any the less hard to bear. Mr. Bowman, 3rd mate, displays the most philosophy; he does his duty like a man, and bears disappointment cheerfully and courageously. Captain caught a sunfish, a flat jellyfish 3 ft. long 2 wide, 2 clumsy fins, large mouth.

Wednesday 4th July 1860

Cloudy all day, wind from W. Cruising. The most quiet 4th of July I ever spent. Not a gun fired not a signal hoisted not a ship in sight until towards night and then in the distance. A whaler laying aback and apparently waiting for us to come up. Supposed her the Atlantic. But our Captain does not feel sociable, because he has got no oil and so changed his course so as to not to meet the vessel, which he thinks is the Atlantic and probably wants to put a letter on board for me to take home.

TWO PAGES FROM THE KNOWLES LOG



*The wood block print at the top indicates that a whale
was lost that day.*

*Latitude and longitude have been omitted from the text
in order to sustain narrative flow.*

Atlantic Ocean

coming down toward us. Thinking we could not take him head and head as we should be obliged to use our oars which would frighten him, we hauled aft our sheets, (we carried a large sail and a studding sail) stood off to our right and then stood back again behind the orhale and were again steering on him with sails and paddles the captain having decided to steer right over his flukes. We got within a boat's length of him and down he went, without seeing the boat having had his spruntings out. By this time the other two boats had overtaken us and we started to come to the ship which was nearly out of sight ^(10 miles off). We rowed to windward all from and half before meeting the ship. We then rose an hour and 20 minutes at rate of 5 miles and luffed to wind and made a large bright fire in an iron pot and hoisted it up for a signal to the two boats, whose horns we soon heard. It was then getting rough, thick and rainy, and we were glad to get them aboard. The mate had been within two boat's length of the orhale after we left. He got on board at 7th, the others, 10. The other ship appeared to have got a orhale, and this orhale knew it and was shy.

Lat. 45° 25'
Long. No. obs.

Thursday June 21. Rugged, thick rain, and unpleasant. Close hauled on the wind, standing ^{8th} ~~8th~~. The mate caught two porpoises this forenoon. Nothing important. The longest day, $15^{\circ} 37'$ Lat. $45^{\circ} 55'$ Long. $24^{\circ} 39'$

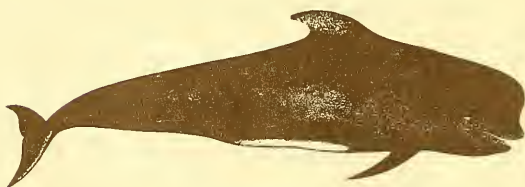
Friday 22. Quite pleasant and quite clear. Cruising for whales. Captain caught a porpoise this afternoon. Nothing of importance. Lat. $44^{\circ} 31'$ Long. $24^{\circ} 10'$

Saturday 23. Strong breeze, rugged and thick part of the day. Cruising; wind from W. Caught a porpoise. A ship, with the Howe's Brig, passed near us this afternoon, on the other tack, working W. Probably an American, and about 1200 tons, heavily laden. She showed her latitude, chalked on a black-board, $24^{\circ} 00'$, differing from ours $40'$. The Captain fears his Chronometer may have been injured by the jarring of the transom by the working off the rudder and now keeps it in his chest. Lat. $45^{\circ} 48'$ Long. $23^{\circ} 20'$

Sunday 24. Strong breeze. Working S.E. A very heavy rain last night. A brig passed near us to windward this afternoon, but did not run down to us although we hauled our head yards aback. Lat. $45^{\circ} 37'$ Long. $22^{\circ} 30'$



pygmy sperm whale



black fish

Thursday 5th

Very pleasant. Wind from W. Beating to windward. This morning passed the carcass of a sperm whale which had been cut in within a few days, probably by the vessel now in sight under short sail which may be the same one we saw boiling. Also saw the case or head which does not usually float and thinking it had not been boiled we lowered a boat and examined it but found it empty. The birds and sharks were feeding upon it. Caught a porpoise.

Friday July 6, 1860

Chilly and damp. Winds from E. Cruising "Full and by." Heavy fog setting in to-night and appearance of bad weather. Several fin-backs in sight. Have decided to take passage for America in the first vessel I find bound there, as the Captain is not willing to go into Fayal without oil and Captain Sherman of the Atlantic informed us that the small-pox is prevalent there.

Saturday 7

Very pleasant, but perfectly calm most of the day. Nothing worthy of notice. Nothing seen but porpoises and a skunk near the vessel. A large vessel in sight this evening bound W. If not so distant I should go on board of her. Saw a cask, rowed to it, empty.

Sunday 8

Very pleasant indeed. Moderate breeze from W. Standing S. E. Reading Hugh Miller's "Testimony of the Rocks." Observations give our longitude today 22 degrees 50 minutes which the Captain thinks must be wrong as we cannot have gone 2 degrees E in last 24 hr, having had a calm and light winds, so he thinks the chronometer must have jumped 3 or 4 minutes. Wm. Swift caught a porpoise to-night; "blacksmith" turned flukes, hauling him in on deck.

Monday July 9, 1860

Heavy wind from N. W. East-standing N. W. under short sail. Very cold. Clearing up towards night. A brig in sight this morning, bound E. Nothing worthy of notice.

Tuesday 10

Very pleasant. Moderate breeze from N.W. Standing S. A sail to-night on our weather beam at a distance bound W. Nothing important.

Wednesday 11

Strong breeze from W. S. W, increasing through the day with fog and rain to-night. "Dirty" weather. Running E. under short sail. To-night lying to under double-reefed main top-sail open our F. C. M. dunsail. Nothing of importance.

Thursday 12

Fresh breeze from W. Running N. E. Captain caught a very large porpoise this noon. A sail was seen ahead this afternoon steering E. Am quite anxious to see a vessel now to get home in.

Friday 13

Blowy, rough, thick and very unpleasant. Wind from W. and heavy swell. Lying to, headed N. Have not seen a sail.

Saturday 14

Heavy wind from W. and very rough all day and rainy this forenoon but clear this afternoon. The vessel has been thrashing about most unmercifully and it has been a wretched day. As I write, she lurches to leeward, I hear a rush of water and a scampering on deck, a sea has broken over the weatherrail from stem to stern and drenched all on deck. Lying to on either tack, hoping to see a sail. Have determined to take passage in some vessel bound to England if I do not see one bound W. The Captain will let me have \$100, the ship's money. A sail passed astern of us bound E.

Sunday 15

Very pleasant. Wind from W. moderating through the day. Still quite rough. Seven sails passed us this forenoon bound E. Succeeded in speaking one of them, a brig bound to London, and asked him to take me. He replied that he had no accomodations, and before I could expostulate with him he was out of speaking distance. He had a number of passengers including several ladies and an old grey haired man. Our mate judged from the ladies' hats that they were from S. America. His long. agreed nearly with ours.

Monday July 16, 1860

Very pleasant, moderate with a sprinkling of rain in the forenoon. About 9 o'clock raised a ship bound E. coming directly for us. Laid a back until about 3 o'clock, when I put my things in the boat and said good-by to all hands, took the letters, and the Captain carried me on board of the ship. It proved to be the ship Rock Light, Captain Hadfley of New York from Mobile bound to Liverpool with cargo of cotton. The Captain consented to take me to Liverpool and has furnished me with a nice stateroom and amenities. The ship is 1580 tons, built at Bath and is so much larger than our vessel that it seems as though I had got on terra firma again. The Captain's nephew Frank Wing, 14 yrs. old is on board. There are no passengers - the Captain belongs in Sippicam.

Tuesday 17

Very pleasant. Moderate breeze from W. Steering E. by N. Two points and 1/2, for variation, brings our new course E.N.E. 1/2 N, the direction of Cape Clear, Ireland. On account of a local attraction of the needle of 1 point at the binnacle, we steer E. by

N. 1/2 N. The crew numbers in all 31, 21 of whom are negroes. Master's name is Craig, second mate, Rolles, a nephew of the captain. Have averaged 3 miles per hour. A fresh breeze to-night. Ship very rank.

Wednesday 18

Very pleasant indeed. Fine breeze from N. N. E. Steering E. by N. 1/2 N, with allsail which keeps the ship well heeled down, as she is cotton loaded and light. She has in 4800 bales. An eclipse of the sun took place this afternoon, about 2h 35m (Greenwich time). Nearly the whole of the sun was covered and the sky being clouded the darkness was very great and the appearance was very sombre and grand. A ship was near us at the time crossing our wake and we could hardly see her. She was a Dutchman, and was heading for the English Channel. Two sails in sight to-night, one bound W. the other E. We have been going along at a good rate today and have made 175 miles in last 24 hours. The Captain carries sail very hard. Heard some genuine "Negro Minstrels" to-night. Some dozen were hauling the braces to the tune of "Tom's gone to Summon, Went 'way in November, be back in December,"—chorus,— "Tom's gone away." The music was very rich. We have a prospect now of being in Liverpool by Saturday morning, providing the wind holds.

Thursday July 19th 1860

Very pleasant indeed. Moderate breeze from N. Steering E. by N. 1/2 N. for Cape Clear. Two sails in sight. All hands are engaged in scrubbing deck, scraping and varnishing the mahogany and painting ship. Two sails in sight. About 200 miles in 24 hours.

Friday 20th

Went on deck at 2 o'clock this morning. Land was already in sight and we soon saw Ireland. Rock Light bearing E, one point on our lee beam. At 3 o'clock we reached it and the Irishmen came off from shore with fresh fish for which the captain gave them beef, bread, tobacco and rum, but as he expected, they thought themselves poorly paid. One was a Cash Pilot. The high land of the coast looked lovely, bathed in a purple haze tinged with beams of the rising sun. We heard the guns of the English fleet, which the Irishmen said had come into Bantry. One boat's crew said that it was rumored that the French had come to take Ireland. The fishermen were from Brookhaven, Baltimore & Cape Clear Island. By a paper we learn that the Great Eastern sailed for N. Y. a week ago. Until 12 o'clock we had light wind and a head tide running 3 miles an hour and got no more than 10 m. from Fastnet. A breeze then came in from S. W. and we are now bowling along before it at the rate of nearly 10 miles an hour, with everything set. At 4 o'clock passed Old Head of Kinsale Light. At six, raining and so thick that it is doubtful whether we can see the lights. Yet this is considered good "Channel Weather." At 11 o'clock at night the wind died away and was followed by baffling breezes, the ship being somewhere near Tuscan Rock Light.

Saturday 21st

Very pleasant. No steady wind during the forenoon. Towards night a strong breeze sprung up from N. E. exactly ahead. Ship stood into Curdican Bay on larboard tack; land in sight on the lee probably 20 miles distant. At 6 o'clock tack ship. At 12 o'clock made a light, supposed Tuscan, and tacked off again to E. A topsail schooner running before the wind attempted to cross our bow but found that we were going too fast for her and had to luff into the wind and throw all aback. The Captain shook his fist at us.

Sunday 22nd

Very pleasant indeed and very clear so that we can see land 40 miles. Kept along on the larboard tack, heading N. E. and passing Bardsey Pt. at 12 o'clock the wind favoring us and at length coming around fair passed South Stack Light. Holly Head, Island of Anglesea about 9 o'clock. At 10 rounded Skerries, and are steering for Point Linus where we will take a pilot. Numerous steamers and sailing vessels with dingy sails and dirty appearance generally are running up and down the channel. We can see the land on both sides of the channel, an unusual circumstance, the Captain says, on the Irish side dimly, on the Welsh coast the rugged country quite answers the idea I had of it. At 11 o'clock took a pilot off Point Linus.

Monday 23rd

Very pleasant. This morning were lying to about 18 miles from Liverpool, waiting for tide to enable us to get over the bar. About 10 took a tug, the "Constitution", and after driving a sharp bargain as to charge engaged him. About 3 o'clock arrived in the river but were not able to get into docks. Anchored in the river and Captain went on shore. Birkenhead, opposite Liverpool, looks green and pretty and the harbor very fine. There is a very strong tide and the water is very muddy — Custom House officers come on board.

Tuesday 24th

Very pleasant. Went on shore this forenoon. Capt. Hadley introduced me to Messrs. Duncan and Kendall, and endorsed my draft on J. Knowles & Co. for \$100. = 2 L 13 s 2 p. Visited St. George's Hall and the Botanical Garden, and in the afternoon came down to the ship as she was hauling into Coburg Dock. She is to have a berth to discharge tomorrow morning and is now lying alongside the clipper ships Empress of the Seas and Lightning, the latter said to be the fastest ship in the world. They belong to the Black Ball Line of Packets to Melbourne. The accommodations of the 1st Cabin are royal. Liverpool is quite a pleasant city, but is of no interest except in a commercial point of view.

Wednesday 25th

Left Liverpool at 9.30 by excursion train on London & North Western R. R. and arrived in London about 6. Paid for my ticket to go and return 17/ about one half regular price. There was in our carriage of six an old lady from London who was very lively, three Irishmen from Dublin, one Scotchman, and an Englishman who has resided in Philadelphia for 30 years. His name is Wm. Clark. When we arrived at London I went with him to Soho Chambers Compton St. Soho, cheap and not very pleasant looking with privilege of cooking. In evening went to Princess Theatre.

Thursday 26, 1860

Walked up to Regent Park this morning through Regent St. & Portland Place, a very pleasant walk. Found my way to Mr. H. T. Lambert...to whom Capt. Hadley gave me a letter of introduction. In the afternoon went out to the Crystal Palace, Lyndenham. All the fountains were in operation — the place is the most beautiful one can imagine and I enjoyed it very much.

Friday 27th

In forenoon visited the British Museum with Mr. Clark and in afternoon St. James Park and Palace and the Queen's Palace.

Saturday 28th

Very pleasant with a slight shower in the afternoon. Took a steamboat down the Thames to Woolrich an important military depot and coming back stopped at the Thames Tunnel and walked through it and back again.

Sunday 29th

Very pleasant with shower in the afternoon. Attended church with Mr. Clark in the Temple. After service walked in the garden. In the afternoon went into Westminster Abbey.

Monday 30th

Very pleasant. Went with Mr. Clark to visit the Tower of London. When a company of about 15 or 20 had collected one of the guides connected with the tower and wearing the ancient uniform of a red dress and a square hat conducted us through the buildings, showing us the places of interest, the Cell where Sir Walter Raleigh was confined, the State Prison, the blocks upon which Mary Queen of Scots was beheaded also the suits of ancient armor and the crown jewels.

Tuesday 31st

Very pleasant. Spent the forenoon in getting a passport from the American Minister, Mr. Dallas, through his secretary, and getting it visaed by the French Consul. In

afternoon went through the Zoological Gardens in Regents' Park. They fed the wild animals: lions, tigers, laughing hyenas, etc. at 4 o'clock. There were a great many, very interesting things. Bought a ticket for Paris & return by Newhaven & Dieppe for 36/.

Wednesday August 1

Left London with Mr. Clark at 12 o'clock. On getting into the car we made the acquaintance of Mr. Maunsey, a Scotchman, rector of a school in Jedborough Scotland and Mr. Robertson, an American who collects prints of American interest in London and Paris. Mr. Robertson has been in Paris seven times and so he took us all under his care. At about 7 o'clock we left Newhaven in the steamer for Dieppe where we arrived about 9. Took some supper and then took the cars for Paris. Arrived at Rouen about 12 o'clock and concluded to stop over night. Accordingly went to a hotel (Hotel Victoria) and Mr. Maunsey trotted out his French and succeeded after great difficulty in making the landlady understand what arrangements we wanted made for rooms and "turned in."

Thursday Aug. 2nd

A drizzling rain nearly all day. Rouen is a fine old city the ancient capital of Normandy. Before the revolution there were 36 churches, there are now 14. Visited the Palais du Justice and the Cathedral of Notre Dame (to the top of) the tower. No steps, which tired Mr. Clark's old legs. The Eglise de Saint-Ouen with the nave by Alexander Renneval and his pupil, the Hotel du Biney, Therould Church St. Vincent where high mass was holding. Also Eglise St. Maclou, the Grosse Horologe & the statue of Jean D'Arc in the market place.

Friday 3rd

At 2 o'clock yesterday took the cars for Paris where we arrived about 6 o'clock. We then all went with Mr. Robertson to a house where he usually stops (No. 4 Rue D'Alger) and took a suite of rooms together. We had 4 rooms one of which we used for parlor and the three others for sleeping rooms. Mr. Roberts and I slept in one room.

Saturday 4th

Visited the Louvre, the Tuilleries, the Luxembourg, the Palace at Versailles.

Sunday 5th

The Hotel de Clunee and Roman baths, the Library of St. Genevieve.

Monday 6th

Pere la Chaise, the Bois du Boulogne, Champs Elysees, the Palais du Justice and [...]

Tuesday 7th

Arc d'Etoile. In the evening sometimes took a walk on the Boulevards which are always very lively, the people being seated out on the sidewalks, taking their [...]

Wednesday 8th

Coffee or wine and their cigar. Bought a [...]

Thursday 9th

Microscope and a dress for mother. A new boulevard is being cut through the Latin Quarter across the river.

Friday 10th

Left Paris this morning at 7 o'clock with Mr. Robertson for London. Arrived at Dieppe and left in the steamer Orleans at 12.55 noon. Had a very pleasant passage across the channel and arrived at New Haven at 7 o'clock and thence by railroad at London Bridge at 10 o'clock and went to Mr. Robertson's lodging (18 Hart St. Bloomsbury).

Saturday 11th

Very pleasant. Went with Mr. Robertson to the National Gallery, to the Houses of Parliament to Westminster Abbey where we heard a service, to the Gallery of Portraits to St. James Park and the Broughton Museum. In the evening made a cup of coffee in his patent French coffee pot and looked over his collection of portraits. Mr. R. has a collection of 100 different engravings of Washington (added later).

Sunday 12th

Rainy this morning but pleasant in the afternoon. At 1 o'clock took the cars at Waterloo Station for Hampton Court, wandered through the galleries of paintings among which are the seven great cartoons of Raphael, had not time to walk much in the garden which was one of the finest in England or France. Took dinner at Park Cottage and came back by omnibus through Borshey Park and Richmond to Picadilly, a charming ride.

Monday Aug. 13th

Very pleasant. Got on board the Excursion Train from London to Liverpool by which I have a return ticket at 10/ and arrived at L. at 8 o'clock evening. There was a train of 50 carriages probably 1500 people. Found the ship Rocklight in Sanden Dock, took a cab to her and turned into my berth.

Tuesday 14th

Went to the office of the steamer and purchased my ticket for a steerage passage by the City of Baltimore for L8=\$8 or 8 guineas to Boston via N. York, providing only my bedding and eating utensils. The cabin is completely full. Had great difficulty in transshipping my chest from the Rocklight to C of B on account of the foreign books particularly the Am. reprint of Macaulay's Hist. of Eng. which is a prohibited book.

Wednesday 15 Aug. 1860

Very pleasant. Slept last night on board the Rocklight. At eight o'clock took the tender from Prince's Pierhead, North Landing Stage, for the City of Baltimore in the stream. There was a tearful time as we shoved off. After we were on board the tender came off two or three times with cabin passengers and baggage. At 12 o'clock a gun was fired and the steam ship stood down the muddy river Mersey. There was a perfect calm and at night we were past Holy Head - There is a grand conglomeration in the steerage with a few clever people. Made the acquaintance of one young lady by offering her some assistance coming on board.

Thursday 16th

Rain during the night and strong wind in our favor. Today breezy and cool. At eight o'clock entered the harbour of Queenstown after the unusually quick run of 20 hours from Liverpool. The distance is called 285 miles. Came to anchor and lay ten hours taking on board fish, passengers, lumber to make berths of, and waiting for some cause to me unknown. At 6 o'clock left the harbour and at 10 were abreast of Fishnet Rock Light, the last land of Europe. A young American fellow was found stowed away last night and was today made an assistant steward.

17th Friday

Head winds and quite rough. Two thirds of the passengers (500 in all, 366 in steerage) are sea-sick. What with the sickness and the natural filth and stench and heat of the steerage it is a going Pandemonium. On one side short Irish girls are groaning and retching as though they would tear their ponderous bones apart, on the other course waiters with meat in dirty tin-pans are crying "Now! who's for pork." "Who's for 'taters," "Who's for gruel" "Any body want tea" etc. Made the acquaintance of Mr. C. Grosmith a soap-manufacturer in the straws, London who has had difficulties in his business and intends to establish himself in the U.S. My berth is in a room 12 ft by 15 ft holding 20 persons. Ran 118 miles.

Saturday 18th

Wind favorable part of the day. Yesterday dealt out lemonade to some of my sick friends until I acquired the name of the Doctor being taken for the ship's physician who keeps himself about half drunk and gives himself no trouble about the sick if he can

avoid it. The doctor is the most thorough, polished & heartless, hollow man of the world I ever saw. Had several patients particularly under my charge.

Sunday Aug 19, 1860

Wind favorable and weather beautiful. One only of my patients does not improve. The cabin passengers are improving and have shown themselves on deck to-day. There is one young couple on board married 3 days before we sailed. Day before yesterday a lady fell from the ladder of the poop deck and broke her arm and the bridge of her nose. Services were held in the cabin. Few of the 500 passengers did or could attend. The crew attended dressed in uniform. The Captain conducts the service on Sunday and though a married man conducts a shameful flirtation on all days with one of three sisters on board, daughters of an English half-pay Colonel, Mr. Penn-Gaskell.

Monday Aug 20

Wind favorable and quite strong. Making good headway with all sail out. A large school of porpoises followed the ship some distance. We have in the steerage a young Londoner, whom we call. "Harry," the "Boy," & "Boots," who represents himself the son of rich parents and who judging from his own account was probably sent away from home to keep him out of mischief, or rather get him out as he seems already to have been in. He is going to Detroit, Michigan.

Tuesday Aug 21

Very pleasant, wind dead ahead. Are nearly half way to New York. The sky has quite an American look.

Wednesday 22

Very pleasant. Wind nearly dead ahead but not very strong. This afternoon came to the edge of the Banks of Newfoundland and for two or three hours had a thick fog.

Thursday 23

Very pleasant. Wind ahead. About noon made the land which proved to be Cape Spear. Ran for Cape Race, but just before we made it a fog rolled over us, but not until the little boat from the yacht of the Associated Press had come alongside and picked up the tin box of lithographic despatches we threw overboard. They told us that the Arabia passed on Sunday but that the Vanderbilt had not touched there, so that our news will anticipate the US.

Friday 24th

Very pleasant. A ceremony peculiar to this day of the year took place this afternoon. Father Neptune & his wife came on board in a car, the uninitiated are shaved &

dunked from a hose or escape by paying 2/.50 for the fine. One young fellow (cabin pasanger) visited the bullying sailors and would neither undergo the ceremony or pay.

Saturday Aug 25th

Warm and sultry this forenoon. Saw several ships.

Sunday 26th

Very pleasant, except for frequent fog. About 10 o'clock this forenoon stopped engines for the first time and took a pilot on board from pilot boat No. 17 being some 350 miles from N. Y. A steamer's whistle was heard this evening, probably the Edinburgh from N. Y. yesterday afternoon for Liverpool. A lovely sunset.

Monday 27th

A beautiful day. The water very smooth, atmosphere perfectly clear a number of vessels in sight. Made land about 10 o'clock. Passed Fire Island about 3 o'clock and anchored in N. Y. harbour about 8 o'clock. Fired our guns as we passed between the forts at the entrance of the harbour and another when we reached Quarantine dock and the Physician came on board. Sunset with the beautiful scenery of Staten Island was magnificent. Mr. Chausley came on board. No passengers were allowed to go on shore.

Tuesday 28th

Very pleasant. Early this morning commenced getting baggage on board tender which took steerage passengers to Castle Garden where our little community was broken up and scattered to the four corners of the Union. Took a look at Broadway, telegraphed home my arrival, and at 5 o'clock took the Plymouth Rock to Stonington thence to N. B.

Wednesday 29th

Very pleasant. At 1 this morning landed at Stonington & took the car. Waited two hours, to my great disgust, at Taunton & Myricks and arrived home 8 o'clock. Met Sidney at the depot. Found Mother just recovering from a severe sickness; Mary vacationing in N. Hampshire & Martha at home. Sidney has been on a fishing voyage. The two letters I wrote home, from the Minerva and from London were received on successive days. Mr. Pierce very ill of water on the knee. Nancy away with my sister Mary. Susan with the Popes and Maggie Girdwood, who is married, in Canada, Hannah at home.

THE END



• SPERM. •



• RIGHT. •



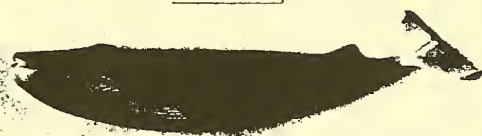
• BOWHEAD •



• HUMPBACK •



• FINBACK. •



• SULPHURBOTTOM •

AFTERWORD

On August 31, 1860, Thomas Knowles returned to Harvard College and his log returned to being a journal. The next day he went to the President "who said I could probably have as much time as I wished to make up my examinations for last term." It proved to be a busy year, overshadowed by threats and preparations for war.

Knowles "recited" in metaphysics, Spanish, logic and history. He made comments about each chapel speaker, attended Republican party meetings, helped inter a symbolic football after the faculty protested the annual contest between the frosh and the sophomores. The Class of 1861 provided editors for an issue of the Harvard magazine: Wendell Phillips Garrison and Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.

However, news from South Carolina affected all. Knowles writes of the inauguration of Lincoln, the landing of troops at Fort Sumter, and Lincoln's proclamation that "75,000 men are to be raised from the Northern States."

In April a class meeting was held to discuss whether the "Austrian Hymn" would be substituted for "Fair Harvard." Motion defeated. On a more serious vein, regiments are formed in Cambridge, troops march through Boston en route to Baltimore, and the senior class forms into companies for drill.

The Cambridge years ended at Commencement in June 24, 1861, and Thomas Knowles returned home to New Bedford where he joined his father in the shipping and mercantile business. In later years he was primarily concerned with cotton manufacturing, becoming president of two New Bedford cotton mills. He served as an alderman, trustee and director of local funds and banks, and clerk of his church. He married twice and had a child by each marriage.

The genealogical record of Thomas Henry Knowles refers to him as a "man who held the confidence and esteem of his business associates all of whom valued his prudent counsel, good judgment and wise forethought." Perhaps the seeds of this estimate are to be found in his log of whaling with Captain Penniman and later events.



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Models of six whales, harpoons

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whale harpoons